

CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development held on Friday, 18 November 2022 at 10.00 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Steve Pitt (in the Chair)

Councillors Linda Symes
 George Fielding
 Russell Simpson

26. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

27. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

28. Seafront Fees and Charges 2023/2024

Claire Watkins, Business Development & Projects Manager, and Claire Looney, Commissioning & Partnership Manager, introduced the report. The introduction of a third weekly beach hut rental offer had been very popular during the summer because of the hot weather.

Councillor Pitt noted that Guildhall Square used to come under the PRED (Planning, Regeneration & Economic Development) portfolio which was probably why it had not been included in the fee schedule. However, its inclusion makes sense as it is managed by Culture and Leisure. Applying charges in line with the Consumer Price Index is not ideal but is recommended practice.

In response to questions from members, officers clarified that the new fee category for events with capacity from 5,000 to 9,999 is proportionate to the fee for events with capacity higher than 10,000. The fees are parallel to those set by Licensing. However, the number of the events in this category is likely to be small and people make their decision when booking an event based on a number of factors.

DECISION

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development approved the fees and charges in accordance with the attached schedule (Appendix A).

29. Gadgeteers: Annual Summer Reading Challenge 2022

David Percival, Libraries & Archives Service Manager, introduced the report. Councillor Pitt said that despite the wet weather at the winner's event at Southsea Castle it was fantastic to see so many families there and children being proud of their medals. The uplift in the number of children completing the Challenge was great news.

Officers explained that the Summer Reading Challenge Plus targets disadvantaged pupils by bringing them to libraries, encouraging them to join and to complete the Reading Challenge. Parental engagement is a challenge. The Summer Reading Challenge Plus will return next year when hopefully numbers of participants will increase.

Councillor Pitt thought the Summer Reading Challenge Plus would get numbers back to where they were before the pandemic. Members agreed the Challenge was a valuable event and it was wonderful to see so many children engaging. They thanked the team for their hard work in getting children to engage, which they acknowledged could be difficult. The participation table shows which schools officers need to focus on for improvement.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development noted the report.

30. Historic Environment Record Audit Report

Jennifer Macey, Historic Environment Record Assistant, introduced the report.

In response to questions from members, officers clarified that Planning pay for the Historic Environment Record post.

Councillor Pitt noted the assets listed in the report help drive the visitor economy.

DECISIONS

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development:

- 1. Noted the outcomes of the HER Audit Report.**
- 2. Approved that the HER Officer creates and implements a Forward Plan based on the five-year action plan contained within the Audit Report.**
- 3. Approved that the HER Officer drafts an Access and Charging Policy, Recording Policy and Information Services Policy to be taken to a future Cabinet Member meeting.**

31. Silver City Exhibition Progress Report

James Daly, Culture Development and Projects Officer, introduced the report.

Councillor Pitt said Silver City was a great exhibition, which he had visited two or three times; interpretation was good, especially the retro TV newsreels which make it more real. Background stories give life to the objects. Visitor numbers compared with pre-Covid show that the Museum is outperforming its compatriots in the sector.

Members said the exhibition was a great example of the city pulling together and the collection's world importance shows what Portsmouth does best. Officers mentioned the refreshed football section of the Museum which featured Portsmouth becoming champions of England and Pompey's first black player. Councillor Pitt said it was well worth a visit and the book makes an ideal present.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development noted the report.

32. The Detectives - Conan Doyle Collection

Laura Weston, Education & Learning Co-Ordinator, and Claire Looney, Commissioning & Partnership Manager, introduced the report. Yesterday 250 people had seen Sherlock Shadow at the Menuhin Theatre, a play acted by vulnerable adults using objects from the Conan Doyle Collection. The performance is ten minutes and is a rolling programme acted by two teams, one from 6 to 7 pm and one from 7 to 8 pm.

Members said the comments from people participating in The Detectives showed it was a positive initiative.

Councillor Pitt thanked the Arts Council for their support. He mentioned the fantastic launch of We Shine at Alexandra Park and how good it was to see families and children enjoying We Shine events in Victoria Park. The Regional Director of the Arts Council was there. The We Create market takes place over the weekend at the former Sainsbury's site in Commercial Road.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development noted the report.

33. Monitoring of the Second Quarter 2022/2023 Revenue Cash Limits

Sue Page, Finance Manager, introduced the report, noting that most of the overspend in the portfolio is because of utility costs and that the majority will be met by corporate contingency funds. As the portfolio has no uncommitted portfolio reserve, the net overspend will be clawed back from next year's budget.

Councillor Pitt said council reserves could not be used indefinitely but a £1m reduction in the portfolio's funding would be catastrophic.

Members agreed and said the situation illustrates the national and international energy crisis. The portfolio needs to be cautious going forward but hopefully next year would see either more funding or lower energy costs. Funding had been on a downward spiral for some time and although culture is very important for wellbeing it is competing against statutory services like adult and children's social care. Councillor Pitt agreed, noting that much of what the portfolio does, such as museums, libraries, parks, is a form of early intervention and improves people's lives and aspirations. If funding is removed then statutory services will see bigger bills.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development noted the report.

The meeting concluded at 10.38 am.

Councillor Steve Pitt
Chair